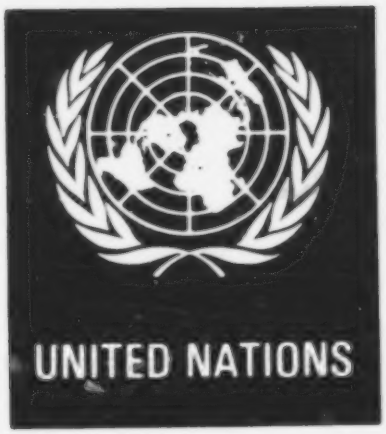

DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
20-23 March 1995

95-18448

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine for Latin America and the Caribbean on the theme "Supporting the peace process - the contribution of Latin America and the Caribbean" was held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 23 March 1995, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/62 A of 14 December 1994.

2. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation comprising His Excellency Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee, who acted as Chairman of the Seminar and NGO Symposium; His Excellency Mr. Joseph Cassar (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee, who acted as Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur of the meeting; His Excellency Mr. İnal Batu (Turkey) and His Excellency Mr. Anatoli Maximovich Zlenko (Ukraine), who also acted as Vice-Chairmen; and Mr. Nasser M. Al-Kidwa (Palestine).

3. The Seminar and NGO Symposium met in three panels on the following topics:

Panel I	New developments since the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP)
Panel II	The Palestinian self-government - challenges and prospects of nation-building
Panel III	New opportunities for action by Latin American and Caribbean countries and organizations

Two workshops specifically for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also held on the following topics: I. Mobilization of and networking by NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote assistance to the Palestinian people; and II. NGO activities to mobilize public opinion for a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine - review of actions taken since the first Latin American and Caribbean Symposium in 1990 and future activities.

4. Presentations were made by 17 experts from Latin America and the Caribbean as well as by Palestinian and Israeli personalities. Each panel was followed by a discussion open to all participants. Representatives of 17 Governments, 3 United Nations bodies, agencies and intergovernmental organizations and 14 non-governmental organizations and representatives of the media, of universities and institutions attended the Seminar and NGO Symposium.

5. The main points of the discussion were highlighted in a final document containing the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar and NGO Symposium. The participating NGOs adopted a number of proposals for future action by Latin American and Caribbean NGOs. Participants also adopted a motion of thanks to the Government and people of Brazil.

6. At the opening session, statements were made by the Chief of Staff of the Acting Minister for External Relations of Brazil, the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the special envoy of Palestine, who read out a message from the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, and by the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine.

7. The closing session was addressed by the Head of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, the special envoy of Palestine, the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine, and the Chairman of the Committee.

8. In the course of the Seminar and NGO Symposium, the participants were apprised of the death of General Matti Peled, a well-known Israeli peace activist who had participated in several previous meetings organized under the auspices of the Committee. The Chairman, speaking on behalf of the Committee and the participants in the meeting, extended condolences to the Israeli people and to the family of General Peled.

II. OPENING STATEMENTS

Statement by the Chief of Staff of the Acting Minister for External Relations of Brazil

9. The opening ceremony of the Seminar and NGO Symposium was addressed by **His Excellency Mr. Adhemar Gabriel Bahadian**, Chief of Staff of the Acting Minister for External Relations of Brazil. He emphasized that Brazil had a multi-ethnic society, including Brazilians of Jewish and Arab descent, and that it was proud of its national identity, having produced a highly cohesive society. That was also a reason why Brazil attributed singular importance to the new dynamism with regard to the Palestinian issue. The Declaration of Principles strengthened the outlook for achieving permanent peace in the Middle East, through a fair and long-lasting negotiated solution. The vigour of the peace process under way proved that negotiation, cooperation and tolerance should prevail over confrontation, belligerence and sectarianism, which invariably led to still deeper divergences while hampering consensus solutions.

10. He pointed out that the United Nations organization had played an outstanding role in Middle East issues, not only through peace-keeping operations and other initiatives, but also with economic, social and humanitarian aid programmes. The organization of conferences, seminars and symposia by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was yet another facet of United Nations activities, which, by spotlighting the basic factors in that situation for the international community, strengthened the alternative of a peaceful outcome.

11. Continuing, Mr. Bahadian said that Brazil had firmly supported the peace talks under way in the Middle East, not only between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), but also among all the other participants and welcomed the progress achieved, such as the May 1994 signature of the Cairo Agreement on Jericho and the Gaza Strip, as well as the more recent peace treaty between Jordan and Israel. The Government of Brazil also hoped that fresh advances would be achieved in the talks between Israel and its other neighbours. It had also been observing the situation in Lebanon with equal attention and reiterated the need for the international community to support the efforts of the Government of Lebanon to rebuild the country and foster national reconciliation, while respecting the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon within internationally recognized borders.

12. He stressed that the implementation of Palestinian transitional self-government represented the first step towards a new reality in the region. In order to ensure a smooth transition taking place in an atmosphere of tranquility, stability, peace and security for all the nations involved, the conduct of that process should be guided by the principles of realism, gradualism and continuity. That path would not lack challenges, however. Only perseverance in pursuing the commitment to reach negotiated solutions could ensure a peaceful and long-lasting outcome that furthered the interests of all the parties involved.

13. Mr. Bahadian continued by saying that the political transition process in the Middle East could not be dissociated from social and economic factors. The importance of economic and commercial aspects was specifically covered in the Seminar on Trade and Investment Needs in Palestine, held under the auspices of the Committee in June 1994 in Paris, and would also come under close study in

the Seminar and Symposium, where one panel session would be devoted to the challenges of building Palestinian national self-government, including efforts to foster economic development.

14. In that regard, the Government of Brazil viewed the economic cooperation agreement signed between Jordan and the Palestinian Authority on 8 February 1995 as a major step forward, an example that could be followed by other countries in the region. Brazil stood ready to support and assist the Palestinian people in their efforts to rebuild their nation. Guided by the importance of the peace process and the need for active, supportive participation on the part of the international community, the Governme[illegible]azil had offered to host the Seminar and NGO Symposium, in order to spotlight the topic in La[illegible]America and the Caribbean and also to foster constructive, democratic discussion as the basis for strengthening regional support for a satisfactory outcome of the question of Palestine.

Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations

15. At the opening session, a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was read out by his representative, **Mrs. Laura Reanda**, Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights. The message stressed that the Latin American and Caribbean countries had actively contributed to the ongoing efforts undertaken by the United Nations in the search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Their sustained participation in international endeavours in that regard would be an important factor in advancing towards a comprehensive solution of the conflict.

16. Highlighting the recent agreements, the message said that the Middle East had witnessed historic and encouraging developments towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The Secretary-General expressed the earnest hope that those important events would be followed by the full implementation of the Declaration of Principles, and progress on the Syrian Arab Republic-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks of the peace process.

17. He pointed out that the situation on the ground continued to be a cause for concern. Acts of violence carried out by those opposed to peace were a reminder that, after decades of bloodshed and distrust, the process of building confidence between Palestinians and Israelis was not only arduous but painful. There was no justification for such deplorable incidents, which were casting a pall over the entire process. The only way to overcome the doubts and apprehensions generated by them was to renew the commitment to finding workable arrangements that would enable the two sides to live peacefully together.

18. The forthcoming negotiations would require patience, perseverance and a spirit of compromise at every turn. They must be carried out in good faith. In that connection, the Secretary-General was mindful of the deep concern generated by the Government of Israel's decision to expand settlements in the occupied territories and its possible implications for the peace process. It was also disturbing that, after nearly 18 months, those agreements had yet to produce tangible benefits in the daily lives of Palestinians. There had been deep frustration at the continuing lack of improvement in living conditions in the occupied territories, particularly in Gaza, where unemployment was estimated to be higher than 60 per cent. The expectations created by the hundreds of millions of dollars pledged by donors had not been met. The Secretary-General appealed once again for the prompt and effective delivery of the assistance already pledged but not yet delivered to the Palestinian people.

19. The Secretary-General had placed the greatest possible emphasis on sustainable economic and social development in the occupied territories. In June 1994, he had appointed Ambassador Terje Rod Larsen as Special Coordinator to ensure the coordinated work of the United Nations system in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people. Work was now under way -- by the United

Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in particular -- to launch a massive public works programme in Gaza. In conclusion, the Secretary-General urged all parties to strive for further progress in the negotiations leading to peace and renewed his pledge that the United Nations would spare no effort in support of that process.

Statement by the Chairman of the Committee

20. **His Excellency Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, emphasized that Brazil and the other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had much to contribute to debates on the question of Palestine in view of their history and experience in the struggle for self-determination and in the problems of nation-building and economic development. They were also home to large Palestinian and Arab expatriate communities. The continuing positive involvement and support of those countries could be of great significance for the Palestinian people during the current difficult transition process and in the future.

21. Recalling the recent agreements reached in the Middle East that were followed by important steps on the ground, he said that the international community and, in particular, the United Nations and its various organs had welcomed that evolution as important and even historic steps towards peace in the region. Those developments had been due to the changed international circumstances following the end of the cold war and the increased efforts to resolve long-standing regional conflicts through dialogue and compromise. They were also due at least in part to the principled position in support of international law and the recognition of Palestinian rights espoused by the international community for many years. The experience during the past months, however, had shown that there was a long and difficult process ahead. Many issues fundamental to the Palestine question remained to be negotiated as part of the permanent status arrangements, including Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements and borders. According to the calendar contained in the Declaration of Principles, those negotiations were to start not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period, that is, the spring of 1996. Meanwhile, however, negotiations over the implementation of the initial stages of the transitional period, for example with regard to free passage between Gaza and Jericho, elections and the release of prisoners, had proved very difficult and had led to long delays in the whole process. The situation on the ground remained a matter of the utmost concern, particularly in view of repeated acts of violence aimed at derailing the peace process, which had resulted in many casualties among both Palestinians and Israelis. The disastrous economic and living conditions in the Palestinian territories, particularly in Gaza, had exacerbated tensions and pointed up the fragility of the peace process.

22. He emphasized the utmost importance for the international community to remain engaged in the Palestine issue, which was of such fundamental importance for peace and security, and to continue to assist the parties in reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement. In several recent resolutions, the United Nations General Assembly had reaffirmed that the United Nations had a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until such a settlement was reached. The United Nations, through the many resolutions of the Security Council as well as the General Assembly and other organs, remained the guardian of international legality with regard to that issue. It also had an important role to play in the provision of economic and technical assistance for development and nation-building. Its involvement in and contribution to the peace efforts was therefore essential.

23. He pointed out that the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had welcomed the achievements of the peace process and had endeavoured to make a concrete contribution in that regard. At the same time, the Committee had remained firm on its position of principle that the final settlement must be based on the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, in

accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, in particular the right to self-determination. The Committee had also insisted that, during the interim period, the Government of Israel must abide by its obligations as the occupying Power under the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 and accordingly refrain from settlement activities, the imposition of closures and other forms of collective punishment, the holding of prisoners in Israel and the like. At its last session, the General Assembly had renewed by overwhelming majorities the mandate of the Committee and those of related United Nations bodies. In conclusion, he stressed that the Committee was prepared to make a positive contribution to international efforts to promote the effective implementation of the Declaration of Principles and other agreements reached by the parties and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people during the transitional period.

Message from the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Chairman of the Palestinian Authority

24. A message from **His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat**, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, was read out by his special envoy, **Mr. Musa Oudeh**. The message emphasized that with the support and assistance of friendly countries and of all peace-loving forces a peace established in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) endorsing the principle of land for peace, would inevitably ensure security and stability for all the peoples and States of the Middle East region and would contribute to the strengthening of peace and stability in the world.

25. The Palestinian people had voluntarily and consciously chosen the road of peace and would maintain its commitment to that strategic choice with full determination and resolve within the framework of the agreements reached with the Government of Israel and would strive to implement the letter and spirit of those agreements. The Palestinian people had taken all necessary steps to ensure the success of those agreements and to impart a forward momentum to the peace process. That sincere effort required the support and backing of the Governments, peoples and States of Latin America and the Caribbean, which had welcomed the peace process from the outset and had for decades supported the just struggle of the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the PLO, in all international forums.

26. The message noted that the Palestinian people had begun to set up its own national Authority, which was making large-scale efforts despite all political and economic difficulties to build a national economy, reconstruct vital amenities, establish national institutions and achieve overall economic and social development. The Palestinian Authority had assumed those tasks in order to improve the living conditions of a people that had endured, as it continued to endure, the continuing Israeli occupation of its territory and its Holy Places and the consequent killings, arrests and deportations, as well as the expropriation of Palestinian land, the daily violations of human rights and the destruction of the infrastructure of the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over the past decades. The Palestinian people had been subjected to long and bitter years of a military occupation whose policies had been targeted at sundering the Palestinian social fabric and abolishing the national identity, precluding any possibility of genuine social development. Moreover, the economic policies of the occupation, such as the plunder and depletion of natural resources and the policies of subjecting and destroying the infrastructure of the Palestinian economy, had led to a situation of utter impoverishment for the Palestinian people and to the creation of a major catastrophe for employment in which some 55 per cent of workers in the Gaza Strip were idle.

27. The message said that the Palestinian people had chosen a just and comprehensive peace based on a foundation of equality, free of ambitions for superiority and domination, forward-looking and open to cooperation in all fields, in order to achieve genuine development for both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. However, the peace process had to complete its course, particularly with respect to the full, speedy and meticulous implementation of the second part of the Declaration of Principles, including its provisions for the redeployment of the Israeli army in the West Bank and for enabling the Palestinian people to hold free and fair elections.

28. In conclusion, the message said that at that difficult but historic time the Palestinian people was looking for increased support, backing and assistance from the peoples of the world and, in particular, from the peoples, Governments and States of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Statement by the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine

29. **Mr. José Félix Ferreyra**, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine, said that there were 115 organizations in the region accredited with the Committee. He recalled the previous Seminar and NGO Symposium, held at Buenos Aires in 1990, and stressed that the current meeting would have to redefine NGO activities, taking into account the significant changes that had taken place in the context of the peace process and which reflected the desire to build a Palestinian State.

30. Since the last regional meeting, the NGOs concerned with the question of Palestine had increased in number and begun an internal communication network that must be improved if they were to become more efficient in establishing solidarity with the Palestinian people. He stressed the importance of greater contact between NGOs in the region and Palestinian NGOs and called attention to the possibilities that were offered by present-day technology.

31. He said that Latin American and Caribbean NGOs hoped to overcome their own limited resources and build a mechanism that would allow them to express the true meaning of their support for Palestinian society. Palestinians must be provided with an economic strategy and a culture of development associated with a specific method of building a civil society. In the present meeting, the Latin American and Caribbean NGOs would begin to produce an operational base for future actions.

Other statements

32. **Mr. Abdulaziz Aboughosh**, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), said that, in spite of the positive developments, the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories were still deteriorating. A major obstacle was the continuation of the Israeli policy of building and enlarging settlements in the occupied territories, especially in and around Jerusalem. He appealed to the international community to force Israel to end its policy of settlement and disfiguring of Jerusalem. While affirming the OIC's backing for the agreements reached, he stressed the need to achieve tangible progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks that would ensure total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan to the pre-1967 lines, as well as from the occupied Lebanese territories. The international community must support the Palestinian Authority in order to remove the effects of occupation and rebuild the Palestinian national institutions and national economy.

33. A message from **His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Meguid**, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, was read out. The message said that the achievements realized by the agreements between the PLO and Israel were about to be undone by the procrastination in implementing their provisions, Israel's failure to observe the timetable for implementation and daily Israeli practices that contravened the spirit and letter of the agreements. The most dangerous of those practices was the settlement activity being carried out at the expense of private Palestinian land, which was confiscated or requisitioned by unlawful means. The message stressed that other infractions of the Declaration of Principles, such as Israel's refusal to redeploy its military forces outside population centres in the West Bank or to release Palestinian prisoners and detainees, the failure to provide a secure corridor between the Gaza Strip and Jericho and the refusal to permit refugees to return, gave rise to concern that the peace process would collapse. The Powers and organizations that were working to bring about peace and which supported progress towards peace should now pressure the Government of Israel to stop placing obstacles in the way of peace.

34. **Mr. Ismail Hamad**, representative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), said that, in addition to institution-building, Habitat's technical assistance covered urban management, infrastructure development, the living environment, disaster mitigation, housing policy and programmes, community economic development and urban poverty alleviation. Following the recent bilateral agreements, Habitat activities had been directed towards institution-building and training of cadres as part of municipality support programmes and environmental management at the local government level. Habitat would also identify priority areas for action and focus on the generation of job opportunities through labour-intensive techniques, use of appropriate building materials, promotion of national expertise and participation of women. He stressed that, in order to consolidate peace and restore hope in the Middle East, a comprehensive and sustainable development process was needed, and the international community must support it through visible and concerted actions.

III. PANEL PRESENTATIONS

35. The panels and speakers were as follows:

Panel I — New developments since the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP)

- The DOP and subsequent agreements
- Status of implementation
- Current status of negotiations
- Future negotiations on the final status

Mr. Nabil Amr
Member, Central Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization; editor of the weekly newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah

Mr. Ran Cohen
Member of the Israeli Knesset; Chairperson of the Meretz Faction

Mr. Hanna Safieh
Professor at the Federal University of Natal, Brazil; member of the Palestine National Council

Mr. Uri Avnery
Israeli journalist, writer and peace activist

Mr. Sa'eb Erakat*
Member of the Palestinian Authority; Chairman of the Palestine Electoral Commission

Panel II — The Palestinian self-government - challenges and prospects of nation-building

- Challenges facing the Palestinian efforts at reconstruction and development
- Role of international assistance in supporting the Palestinian people

Mr. Sari Nusseibeh
President of Al-Quds University, Jerusalem; Chairperson, Palestine Consultancy Group

Mr. Luís Mesa Delmonte
Director, Centre for Studies on Africa and the Middle East, Havana

Mr. Ivan Moreira
Deputy, Chilean Parliament

Panel III — New opportunities for action by Latin American and Caribbean countries and organizations

- Economic assistance and cooperation: the new environment for Governments and private groups
- Cooperation of NGOs with their Palestinian counterparts
- The contribution of diaspora Palestinians
- Culture and the media: new possibilities for cooperation

Mr. Pedro Paulo Pinto Assumpção
Ambassador, Head of the Middle East Department, Ministry of External Relations of Brazil

Mr. Gustavo Marcelo Marquez
Businessman, member of the Argentine Arab Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Jaber Omar
Professor of Economics, Catholic University of Pelotas and Federal University of Rio Grande, Brazil

Mr. Juan José Salinas
Journalist, TELAM News Agency, Argentina

Mr. Hussein Abdelkhalek
Representative of Palestine in Chile

Mr. Carlos Etchegoyhen
Medical doctor and psychoanalyst, Uruguay; Visiting Scholar at the University of North Dakota

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*Owing to other urgent commitments, Mr. Erakat could not attend personally, but his paper was read out on his behalf.

Mr. José Félix Ferreyra
Chairman, Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine; Professor of Psychology at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Costa Rica

Mr. José Elias A.
President, University of San Andrés, Chile; President of the Palestinian Federation in Chile

Mr. Juan Abugattas
Professor of Philosophy, University of San Marcos and the University of Lima, Peru

Ms. Tilda Rabi
President, Federation of Palestinian Organizations in Argentina

The panel presentations are summarized below in the order in which they were made.

Panel I

New developments since the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP)

36. **Mr. Nabil Amr**, member of the Central Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization and editor of the weekly newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah, said that the general formulation of the texts of the Declaration of Principles and its annexes had created serious problems for their practical implementation. Disagreements arose regarding their interpretation and the means of implementing them. He concluded that the texts had ceased to be a political basis agreed on by the two parties. The developments since the signing had shown that the parties opposed to the peace process had enormous potential for obstructing the process, forcing Israeli and Palestinian leaders to yield to the respective oppositions. The peace process had entered a vicious circle of internal power struggles, in particular in Israel, where the Government had decided to put the negotiations with the Palestinians on hold, to postpone the implementation of the agreements and to impose new conditions on the Palestinians. He expressed concern at the continuing expansion of settlements, which had led to serious confrontations between Palestinians and Israelis.

37. He pointed out that the political agreements involved a number of economic commitments. The continued economic decline would lead to increased internal conflicts and jeopardize the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Moreover, issues regarding culture and media had been neglected, thus distancing intellectuals from normalization and increasing their resistance to it. He called upon the Government of Israel to take courageous decisions, building on the support of the peace process by the Israeli society at the time of its election. He proposed to link the interim stage to the final stage, in order to overcome the weakness of the interim period and to hold talks on all issues, including Jerusalem and settlements. Israel and the international community must also speed up their efforts to promote economic development in the West Bank and Gaza. In conclusion, he called upon Israel to overcome its fear of a Palestinian State, a sovereign State ensuring its own security, interacting positively with its neighbours and taking part in building a new Middle East.

38. **Mr. Ran Cohen**, Member of the Israeli Knesset and Chairperson of its Meretz Faction, emphasized at the outset that the agreements of Oslo and Cairo between the Government of Israel and the PLO leadership were historic achievements, based on the mutual recognition of the national rights of the two peoples and the political separation between them. The continuous support of the international community was vital in arriving at the Declaration of Principles and its realization. He enumerated the gains achieved through the agreements, among them the full mutual recognition by

both leaderships and the cooperative work to implement their provisions; the beginning of Palestinian self-rule in some areas, including self-administration, economic development and law-enforcement, which drew the Palestinians close to independence and complete self-determination; the partial withdrawal of the Israeli army, which had reduced friction with the population; the empowerment of Palestinians with primary authority in education, health, taxation, social welfare and tourism in areas still under Israeli rule; and the beginning of discussions on transferring authority over additional fields. Israel had halted the building of new settlements in the occupied territories, putting a halt to the policies of the previous Government, it had freed thousands of prisoners and a joint committee was now reviewing the terms for the release of others who were not violently active against Israel and the peace agreements. Among the positive developments, he also mentioned the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and a number of Arab countries; the channel of negotiations between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic was being taken seriously and continued in spite of the difficulties. All these important achievements could not be reversed.

39. At the same time, he pointed out the obstacles to fulfilling the agreements, the most serious of these being terrorism. He pointed out that terrorism, such as the massacres in Tel Aviv and Beit Lid near Netanya, and the terrorist activities in Jerusalem, Hadera, Afula and other places had killed more than 160 Israelis in the previous year and a half. He stressed that that terrorism inspired further hatred among Israelis against Palestinians, jeopardized the peace process and further strengthened the extreme right in Israel, which is opposed to the Declaration of Principles and all compromise with Israel's Arab neighbours. The Hebron massacre and provocations by Jewish settlers hurt the peace process no less than terrorism against Israelis. Terrorism was the most effective enemy of the peace process. As a result of the closure of the Gaza Strip after such attacks, the unemployment rate there rose to 40 per cent, thus creating a difficult economic environment and helping extremists. He said that terrorism and the expansion of the settlements in the occupied territories were the main obstacles to enforcing security for separation as a necessary precondition for a Palestinian State. Referring to a recent agreement concerning the redeployment of the Israeli army from Palestinian population centres as a necessary precondition for democratic elections, he expressed the view that the Palestinian State would become a fact after the elections. Even if the Government of Israel did not consider the creation of a Palestinian State alongside Israel a viable solution, his party, Meretz, saw it as a positive and desired solution. In order to strengthen the process, the Palestinians, the Arab States and all nations should take effective measures against terrorism; the Palestinian Authority should disarm all organizations posing a threat to law and order and Israel should redeploy its army from major Palestinian population centres, including nearby Jewish settlements, to allow for free, democratic elections. The Government of Israel was willing to release more prisoners, to resolve the refugee problem and to transfer more administrative responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority, subject to Israel's security needs.

40. In conclusion, he stressed that promoting the peace process was in the world's interest and that the international community, including the Latin American countries, should contribute to the achievement of a stable peace through support and aid, in particular public financial aid and private investment in the West Bank and Gaza.

41. **Mr. Hanna Safieh**, professor at the Federal University of Natal, Brazil, and member of the Palestine National Council, referred to the problems the peace process was facing and said that the co-sponsors had failed to influence the negotiating parties. Israel, taking advantage of the balance of power, could dictate the pace of the negotiations; it had even started to rewrite the signed agreements. He stressed that there were three central issues for the future negotiations on the final status: settlements, refugees and Jerusalem. He expressed disappointment that the necessary and expected freeze on all settlement activities had not occurred. Those settlements had been built on confiscated land. For the final status, it was necessary to evacuate the settlements and to hand them over to the Palestinian society as part of the compensations. The question of the refugees should be tackled within the framework of international legality, based on General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, guaranteeing their right either to return or to receive compensation. He said

that the right of return was individual and inalienable, and as such not subject to the political negotiations. He pointed out that no regional solution to the conflict would be possible unless a satisfactory, workable solution was found for Jerusalem, based on the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The continued settlement building in, and the isolation of, Jerusalem from the West Bank contradicted the commitments made by Israel. He said that Jerusalem should remain undivided, yet function as two capitals for two separate sovereign entities, where freedom of access was guaranteed for everybody and each religious shrine was managed by the religious community concerned. International guarantees should be worked out for that formula. In conclusion, he called upon the international community to assume its responsibilities and facilitate the negotiations and guarantee the application of the agreements.

42. **Mr. Uri Avnery**, Israeli journalist, writer and peace activist, emphasized that the Declaration of Principles was a historic breakthrough. The Palestinian people had gained a national foothold in their historical homeland, under their national flag, their national Government and their national army ("police"). The Israeli side had gained a measure of admittance in the Arab world, a breakdown of the Arab boycott and the termination of the intifadah. Since then, nearly everything had gone wrong, the reason being the absence of agreement on the final aim of the peace process. While the Palestinian and some Israeli peace activists had a sovereign State of Palestine in mind in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with its capital in East Jerusalem, the Government of Israel seemed to look for a partition of the remaining Palestinian territory on the lines of the old Allon Plan, that is, annexation of Greater Jerusalem, the Jordan valley, the Dead Sea shore, plus some settlement blocs. He said that the failure to respect the deadlines negotiated in the Declaration of Principles was a clear violation of the agreement by Israel. While there was general consensus in Israel to leave the Gaza Strip, there was none about leaving the West Bank. As a result, the withdrawal of the Israeli army away from populated areas in the West Bank was not yet considered in practice, and negotiations on modalities of Palestinian elections were therefore unsubstantial. Given also the other violations of the Declaration of Principles in letter and spirit, such as the delay in prisoner releases, the closure of the Gaza Strip and the economic hardship imposed on Palestinian families, he expressed understanding for the Palestinians losing faith in the peace process. Those two different perceptions could also be seen with regard to the security situation: while Israelis blamed Palestinian terrorism as a reason for delaying the implementation of the Declaration of Principles, Palestinians saw the cause of terrorism in the Israeli failure to implement the agreement.

43. He continued by analysing the Israeli peace movement. He said that Meretz and the Peace Now movement were very supportive of the Government in fear of a re-emergence of the right-wing Likud. Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc) and similar groups were severe critics of the Government, demonstrating for the full implementation of the agreements. He called upon world public opinion to support those Israeli peace groups together with the Palestinians. Even more important was the support of the world for the Palestinian self-governing authority, its political, economic and social success being of paramount importance for peace in the region.

44. In his statement read out during the panel's deliberations, **Mr. Sa'eb Erakat**, member of the Palestinian Authority and Chairman of the Palestine Commission for Local Government and Elections, pointed out that national identity and national survival required the building of strong national institutions that could be based either on armies, technology and weaponry or on democracy, pluralism and inclusion. The Palestinians had made their strategic choice for democracy as the only way to ensure survival. In December 1993, the Commission had been appointed and started immediately with the preparation of elections for a Palestinian Council in accordance with the DOP. That included the drafting of an election law, the opening of a central and several district offices, the organization of training courses, the setting up of a draft electoral register and the launching of civic and voter education programmes.

45. He noted that some election questions required bilateral negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis and that some progress had been made. In accordance with the DOP, the Palestinian Council would be the Interim Self-Government Authority, with both legislative and executive power.

The Council would be elected under agreed supervision and international observation. The elections, however, must be organized and directed by a Palestinian Central Election Commission. He emphasized that the most important pre-requisite was the redeployment of Israeli forces from populated Palestinian areas to specified security zones. That redeployment must take place before any elections were held. In conclusion, he stressed the urgent need for movement in the second phase of the peace process to enable the building of Palestinian institutions, Palestinian democracy and the Palestinian nation. Otherwise, the peace process might collapse.

Panel II

The Palestinian self-government - challenges and prospects of nation-building

46. **Mr. Sari Nusseibeh**, President of Al-Quds University, Jerusalem, and Chairperson of the Palestine Consultancy Group, pointed out that the Palestinian people and its leadership were engaged on two separate fronts in the effort of nation-building: the immediate negotiations on the political front and the internal challenges, such as management, investment and working with the human resources. The two main challenges were closely interconnected and any setback in the negotiations had an immediate impact on nation-building. The political developments had been accompanied by economic and business discontinuity, separating the occupied territory in five parts. Moreover, Israel had unilaterally decided to cut off East Jerusalem, the central communication point for the Palestinians.

47. He continued by saying that there were different arguments as to the cause of terrorism, but the phenomenon itself distracted the Palestinians from focusing on planning and nation-building. Expectations for external aid by the international community had not been met partly because of the deteriorating business environment. Thus, the interim period, conceived as a confidence-building period, had turned into a confidence-destroying or suspicion-building period. He warned against despair, stressing that the future could still be influenced and shaped by individuals and nations, leading, perhaps, to a political breakthrough, better Palestinian administration and a smooth inflow of capital.

48. He emphasized that the Palestinians were also facing the challenge of building a free society, carefully synchronizing individual rights with public interest. Basic civil freedoms must be made available to individuals and groups, and official practices denying such freedoms must be removed. Government behaviour should be fully transparent to the public. Moreover, government organizations must not replace NGOs, and donor countries as well as international NGOs must continue to support Palestinian NGOs. The Government must also encourage the emergence of parties and allow the expression of individual and collective opinion. He put special emphasis on the need to revolutionize the educational system to develop a culture of tolerance, pluralism and respect for individual human life and thought. Freedom and equality should govern the development of a democracy. Those efforts must start with children, their school and home environments. International NGOs could significantly contribute to that process.

49. In conclusion, he outlined the framework for a final status that must include a full Israeli withdrawal, a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its sovereign capital, the dismantlement of settlements and all land confiscation procedures, full restoration of Palestinian refugees' rights and full compensation for all resources used. He called for a firm Israeli commitment to that framework as well as a firm Palestinian commitment and ability to navigate a smooth, stable and incident-free development of the interim period.

50. **Mr. Luis Mesa Delmonte**, Director of the Cuban Centre for Studies on Africa and the Middle East, pointed out that the preservation of peace and the strengthening of security must be the primary goals of the current process of Middle Eastern dialogue, both at the Israeli-Palestinian level and at the various regional levels. The international community should support the major trends promoting constructive dialogue. He emphasized that in view of the difficult socio-economic situation, international assistance could have a very positive influence on the transitional process, in particular, in its early stages. Among the important sectors for international assistance, he cited development of infrastructure and communications, transfer of technology, creation of jobs, diversification of production, institutional, financial and entrepreneurial management consulting, urban and housing development, water resource management, energy generation, intensive agriculture, education and health programmes. The basic goal of that assistance should be to lay the structural groundwork for the Palestinian plan and to enhance the creative potential of the people. The new Palestinian entity should establish preferably balanced economic relations with Israel, instead of promoting dependency, or aspire to economic self-sufficiency. He called for accelerated delivery of the promised aid by the principal donors, for intensified support from other countries of the Middle East region and from the Palestinian diaspora.

51. As regards Latin America and the Caribbean, he said that Governments, business groups and NGOs should identify the specific aspects and forms of support they could provide, identify potential spheres of cooperation and make concrete proposals for assistance. He stressed that the United Nations and its specialized agencies, together with numerous NGOs, were playing an even greater role in economic and humanitarian assistance and should serve as reception centres for cooperation proposals and as means for channelling assistance. As an example, he referred to Cuba, whose major contribution could be, with the support and sponsorship of specialized international organizations, in the spheres of education, health, construction and sport. In that regard, he outlined a number of concrete proposals. In conclusion, he pointed out that assistance and cooperation between least developed countries was generally cheaper and more adaptable than those offered by institutions and experts from highly developed countries.

52. **Mr. Ivan Moreira**, Deputy in the Chilean Parliament, pointed out that a community of more than 350,000 individuals of Palestinian descent existed in Chile and that they had made a generous contribution to the development and growth of Chilean society, successfully integrating into the intellectual, political and business worlds. The Palestinian people was facing two major challenges: its struggle to obtain independence and sovereignty with peaceful means and to develop as a State that would offer better living conditions to its people and integrate fully into the international community. As a result of the agreements reached, there had been increasing international acceptance of the Palestinian cause. At the same time, the international community had an obligation to provide support for the peace negotiations. He stated that Chile had been the first Latin American State to send an official mission in support of the emerging Palestinian State, noting the extremely difficult situation in the self-governing territories. The slow materialization of international support could provoke a social explosion. He stressed that the Palestinian territories could become a source of wealth with technology provided by developed countries of the West, Asia and the Middle East, peace being the precursor to integration. Latin American countries must support the Palestinian people with specific activities, such as support in international financial agencies, transfer of technology, support in the organization of a social security system and others.

53. Individual national assistance funds with clearly stated objectives and transparent regulations could ensure the participation of Latin American enterprises in infrastructure projects, including opening of credit lines, provision of syndicated loans, guaranteeing investments and establishing an office or committees of entrepreneurs to support Palestinian self-rule. Priority areas would be traditional ones such as health, nutrition and agriculture or new ones such as the creation of an institutional framework to promote foreign trade, operation of the central bank, supervision of private banks, a social security system, management of international cooperation, the taxation system and the organization of the public sector. In conclusion, he called upon all parliaments of the American continent to work together to strengthen peace in the Middle East and ensure the stable and lasting development of the Palestinian State.

Panel III

New opportunities for action by Latin American and Caribbean countries and organizations

54. Mr. Pedro Paulo Pinto Assumpção, Ambassador and Head of the Middle East Department, Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, spoke about the role of his country during the peace process and the importance of international cooperation in the transition period. He said his country had welcomed the peace agreements and hoped that Israel and its Arab neighbours would succeed in building a just and lasting peace. While Israelis had a legitimate claim for security, Palestinians also had a legitimate need to change the conditions of their lives.

55. Brazil had taken concrete measures to support reconstruction efforts by the Palestinian Authority. It had given special diplomatic status in Brasilia to the PLO and had begun arrangements for a bilateral dialogue. It had also made its first contribution to UNRWA. His Government hoped to look further into possibilities for cooperation and to present them for evaluation to the Palestinians. In conclusion, he emphasized that the peace process was irreversible and international cooperation was vital to its success. It was necessary, however, to move from words to action.

56. Mr. Gustavo Marcelo Marquez, businessman and member of the Argentine-Arab Chamber of Commerce, highlighted two major developments that had occurred simultaneously in the Middle East and Latin America: the signing of the peace agreements between the PLO and Israel and the establishment of Mercosur, consolidating the economic integration of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Although those two processes responded to different needs and also differed in every aspect, they were none the less important as frameworks for the future development of trade relations between South America and the Palestinian community. There was currently little trade between the two parties, owing for the most part to the constant political and economic instability and the lack of institutions for channelling potential relations. Information on existing supply and demand, which was the basis for any commercial transaction, was unreliable. The two major difficulties to be overcome were the lack of proper channels for conducting bilateral economic relations and the lack of a database providing information on goods, prices, delivery dates, terms of payments and so on.

57. He continued by saying that Latin America, like the Palestinian territories, was facing the challenge of how to become integrated into the international trading system and through what mechanisms in order to secure a future of peace and an adequate quality of life for its inhabitants. NGOs had, in that regard, a strategic value for further broadening the base, they must serve as a link between the people and the Government of each country. To achieve that, they had to overcome their current lack of dynamism. The private sector should also assume responsibility for monitoring the growth of productive activity in both regions, in order to formulate policies based on the principles of maximum benefit for the parties. He said that under the current extremely competitive conditions, information management and the routine incorporation of new technologies were important tools to be used daily.

58. Also, international organizations must support government initiatives and private sector activity, offering their technical and financial assistance. United Nations organs and agencies, like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), could share infrastructure data on, for example, agriculture, health, production and micro-enterprises, or monitor trends in order to ensure a minimum standard of living and development. All those actors had to cooperate for the sake of successful relations. In conclusion, he stressed that the trade component was an indicator of the economic strength and that it could function as a catalyst for peace. Political decision-makers must establish clear and equitable rules in order to promote trade and development.

59. Mr. Jaber Omar, Professor of Economics at the Catholic University of Pelotas and the Federal University of Rio Grande, Brazil, gave a brief overview of the main characteristics of the Palestinian economy, stressing that it was a small and open one. A GNP of US$ 1.9 billion originated at 44 per cent from services, 27 per cent from agriculture, 18 per cent from industry and 11 per cent from construction. Over the past two decades an increase in the share of construction was accompanied by a decline in agriculture. The industrial base able to work as an engine for economic growth was poor since the economically active population constituted only 20 per cent of the overall population. Summarizing the situation, he pointed out the high dependency of the Palestinian labour force on Israel, the lack of job opportunities in the West Bank and Gaza, low savings, investments, production and income, and a population growth rate constituting a serious challenge to the Palestinian economy. That was accompanied by a permanent deficit in the trade balance as a result of restrictions imposed by the occupying Power, leading to serious constraints on the availability of foreign reserves. He said that the priorities for the future Palestinian economy were in housing, communications, education, electricity, irrigation/water and health. The Palestinians had to establish a new productive and diversified economic base, decrease dependency on the Israeli economy and resolve the problems of the foreign sector, thus building an economy that offered employment, production income and welfare.

60. Capital and a qualified labour force were the necessary conditions to achieve that goal. Latin American and Caribbean countries should meet their historic and moral responsibility and make concrete commitments towards economic assistance, including financial capital, especially in the fields of technology and labour force training, resolving the problems of the trade balance and offering assistance in agriculture and irrigation. They should open their markets for Palestinian exports on the basis of preferential tariff treatment, establish joint chambers of commerce and Palestinian trade councils to promote commerce and investment. In the field of technology, Latin American and Caribbean countries should help through joint ventures and direct investments in industry and agriculture and through manpower training in the administrative, financial, monetary, industrial and agricultural fields.

61. Mr. Juan José Salinas, journalist at TELAM, an Argentinian news agency, referred to the large Jewish and Arab communities living in Argentina and showed, giving examples of his personal life, how he was affected by everything that happened in the Middle East. He said that he was opposed to the millennial injustices committed against the Jewish people and that, for the same reasons, he supported the just struggle of the PLO because he believed that its leadership was firmly committed to a just peace, under which both peoples could exist and develop in freedom. He would like to put himself at the disposal of peace-loving Palestinians and Israelis to disseminate information on their initiatives from Buenos Aires to the Latin American region, where there was a lack of reliable information. New technologies, such as fax and the Internet, allowed the setting up of a small agency to distribute reliable information originating in the Middle East with only modest staff and infrastructure. There was a niche in the market not occupied by the major international agencies. In that context, it was important to establish a representation in the region of Wafa, the Palestinian news agency. NGOs working in conjunction with such a small agency could constitute a focal point for the promotion of other opportunities. He called upon the other panelists and NGOs present at the meeting to help launch such an initiative.

62. With regard to other activities, he said that peace-loving Israelis should push for replacing Israeli exports of weapons and military supplies to Latin America with trade that would promote mutually beneficial relations between Latin American countries, Israelis and Palestinians. Relevant areas were irrigation, biotechnology applied to fruit and vegetable cultivation, fertilizers, the fight against desertification and also medicine, systems for preventing cardiac infarction, cosmetics, the use of therapeutic sediments and salts from the Dead Sea.

63. Mr. Hussein Abdelkhalek, the representative of Palestine in Chile, stressed that the international community should play a major role in the peace process. The situation of the Palestinian people was critical, given the devastated economy and high unemployment. NGOs could make an

important contribution to solving the difficulties. He described the activities of Palestinian NGOs, including those in the health education sectors. Through subsidies and grants, aid had been focused on secondary education. Palestinian NGOs had funded homes for unprotected children and technical training programmes. Special attention had been directed to projects to help women and children, the deported, the wounded and those otherwise affected by war. They had established libraries and research centres to protect the Palestinian cultural heritage and national identity. Financing had come from various sources, including national collection of funds and Palestinian governmental and non-governmental sources from the Persian Gulf region and other parts of the world. However, the flow of funds had been curtailed because of a diversion of international aid to Eastern Europe, the effects of the Gulf War and a decrease in funds from the PLO owing to its political difficulties. Thus, Palestinian NGOs had had difficulty continuing their former activities.

64. He pointed out that in the Latin American countries NGOs had played an important role in helping nations arrive at their present stage of development. While NGOs still faced major challenges in their own countries, they had much to offer on the international scene by virtue of their experience. They could help Palestinians in the areas of health, education, agriculture, eradication of poverty, administrative management and software technology. They could cooperate with Palestinian NGOs, obtaining financial assistance from third parties. To carry out that triangular concept might need government cooperation. There must be a coordinated design to include Latin American NGOs.

65. **Mr. Carlos Etchegoyhen**, medical doctor and psychoanalyst from Uruguay and Visiting Scholar at the University of North Dakota, referred to the Uruguayan experience during the period of dictatorship (1972-1985), when forced exile had turned into a very painful experience, and he stressed that in the process of returning to their country, Uruguayans had had to understand the experience of exile as another effect of state terrorism, of persecution for reasons of politics, ideology, religion, economics, ethnic origin or even gender. He said that, unfortunately, exile nowadays was not an exceptional situation: the media were reporting on an almost daily basis about persecution, exile, torture and death, but that side of state terrorism did not turn out to be news-worthy and the mass media quickly lost interest. As a medical doctor and psychoanalyst, he treated victims of state terrorism and was surprised at the great damage caused by political dictatorships and the few possibilities to heal the psychological wounds. There was no universal treatment, no predictable development, no sure prognosis regarding victims of dictatorships. He then described the sufferings of people forced to live in exile. They all shared the pain of banishment, the anxiety of waiting, the apprehension of the encounter and all the accumulated sorrow. In particular, he condemned cases where children of families forced into exile had been brought up by their oppressors and where, later, countries had passed laws of indulgence and pardon, thus legalizing such kidnappings. In conclusion, he stressed the importance of disseminating information concerning acts of state terrorism and of raising awareness of their possible damage.

66. **Mr. José Félix Ferreyra**, Professor of Psychology at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Costa Rica and Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine, stressed that the new international context characterized by the peace process revealed new capabilities on the part of all the actors concerned, including the NGOs. In Latin America and the Caribbean, there were about 115 NGOs accredited with the Palestinian Rights Committee. Most of them were facing severe financial problems, but were effective within their means. The regional NGO network could build on skilled human resources, a reasonable technological structure and limited but not unattainable financial resources to define strategies with a specific orientation reflecting Palestinian requirements. The NGOs were using the cooperation of alternative radios, trade union papers, Jewish community publications, regional newscasts, contacts with journalists and public academic discussions to pursue their goals. He pointed out that the Jewish and Palestinian communities in the region had found a means of balanced coexistence. NGO activities did not only promote awareness among the people of Latin America but also initiated a learning process for the promotion of peace for future Jewish and Palestinian generations. NGO activities were based on successful local experience.

67. For future action, he suggested building up influence on high-level decision-making organs and acting as pressure groups in order to open the way for technical assistance or trade. NGOs could play a role in the training of human resources in the fields of health, education and public administration. Proven teaching theories would be perfectly usable in Palestinian study centres in their human resource training programmes. Limitations were purely financial, but that problem could also be solved. NGO work in Latin America and the Caribbean put a special focus on the situation of Palestinian women and children with a view to establishing a regional office for women and children. In conclusion, he stressed that Latin America and the Caribbean could offer a response in the form of practical solutions in a spirit of solidarity.

68. Mr. José Elias A., Chairman of the Palestinian Federation in Chile and President of the University of San Andrés, Chile, said the ties between Palestinians in the diaspora and the emerging Palestinian State were crucial to the latter's success. Palestinians in the diaspora had made great contributions to their new countries, but they had continued to keep their ties with the ancestral land. Their creativities could be brought together to foster the success of the new State.

69. He said the Chilean Palestinian community was interested in joining the movement to support the Palestinian people and that interest was reflected in the governmental and non-governmental sectors of the country. An interministerial mission from Chile had established connections with the West Bank and the Government of Israel to establish specific projects during 1995. The mission had identified health, nutrition and agriculture as areas for action.

70. He said urgent attention should be given to facilitating foreign trade; tax collection; social security; financing health assistance; supervision of private banks; construction of ports to facilitate trade; and support for a voter registration system. Also needed was the establishment of a framework for international cooperation for the proper use of resources. It would be useful to bring Palestinian experts to Chile to observe how Chileans had dealt with the problems they faced.

71. He pointed out that those initiatives had engaged the participation of both the government and private sectors. The diaspora must be organized at the local, regional and international levels to avoid duplication of effort. He asked for support from international organizations for all the projects that were being generated. Palestinians and their descendants in the diaspora could collaborate on business projects and the establishment of feasibility studies in collaboration with the interim authority. They could also cooperate with authorities and organizations in friendly nations and work to influence public opinion. He recommended that Santiago be the venue for the next NGO Symposium.

72. Mr. Juan Abugattas, Professor of Philosophy at the University of San Marcos and the University of Lima, Peru, emphasized at the outset that the Palestinian diaspora living in Latin America and the Caribbean had reached an important level of unity, mobilizing energies in support of the Palestinian cause. This was demonstrated by the proliferation of community organizations, the revitalization of the interest of second and third generation immigrants to learn Arabic and Arab history and by the configuration of subregional entities grouping the different national organizations dedicated to supporting and promoting Arab causes. One reason for that was the establishment of a physical presence of the PLO in the subcontinent, another the change in the composition of the Palestinian communities. Their new leaders were integrated into the political, economic and social élites of their respective countries, remaining at the same time very sensitive to the fate of the Palestinians. However, in spite of that growing mobilization, the Palestinian communities were not able to develop a political initiative on their own. They did not become real lobbies or mechanisms of pressure with a well defined strategy to influence public opinion or determine state policy. Although their actions remained mostly reactive, they produced certain positive results, for example a better understanding of the Arab contribution to the building of modern Latin American and Caribbean republics, or of voting patterns of those States at the United Nations which were favourable to the Palestinian positions. He criticized the lack of achievements with regard to public opinion and communications. Also, the diaspora had not been able to maintain former levels of mobilization. The new developments, in particular the peace process, had generated a certain amount of discomfort and

confusion, with paralyzing effects among the diaspora. Their institutions had not been able to change strategies from confrontation to a constructive approach. Moreover, most of the communities in the region were not aware of their own potential to contribute to the construction of a Palestinian State; their aid to Palestinian state-building should correspond directly to their positions as professionals, merchants or industrialists. Certain psychological barriers had to be dismantled, such as the distrust of far-reaching concessions that had earlier been perceived as impossible by Palestinians or the apparent division within the Palestinian people. He asked the embassies of Arab States in the region to make an effort to explain the peace process to their constituencies.

73. Making several suggestions, he called upon the Palestinian communities in the diaspora to mobilize to ensure that the Palestinian question was given priority in the foreign policy of their respective countries and that official relations with the PLO were raised to the highest possible level. Informing public opinion about the peace process remained a central task. Economic support had to shift from humanitarian donations to productive investment. Priority should be given to public administration and financial management, professional and technical assistance, education, health, public works and recreation. As a prerequisite for that aid, he urged a democratic development in the territories under Palestinian authority directed toward a tolerant political order, where human rights were carefully respected. He stressed that another dimension of support for the peace process consisted in the promotion of good relations between Arab and Jewish communities in the region, which would require a major change in attitude on the part of both sides. Such cooperation could have an important political impact and a mobilizing effect on public opinion and the respective Governments.

74. **Ms. Tilda Rabi**, President of the Federation of Palestinian Organizations in Argentina, said the Confederation of Palestinian Organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean (COPLAC) represented over 500,000 Palestinians and Latin Americans of Palestinian descent, or 8 per cent of the world's Palestinian population. It maintained a dialogue with Latin American authorities, inter-American Arab bodies and non-governmental and governmental organizations. It also maintained liaison between its membership and the PLO. The Confederation disseminated information on events in the Middle East, in particular the intifadah, and requested Latin American Governments to pursue a foreign policy consistent with United Nations resolutions. COPLAC advocated a dialogue with Jewish communities in the region to dismantle the barriers to constructive dialogue and to urge those communities to persuade the Government of Israel to respond to Palestinian hopes. The Confederation had also protested against the negative stereotyping of Muslims and Arabs by the mass media. The intifadah had gone unnoticed in Latin America. Propaganda had fostered a sense of guilt towards Jews that discouraged Latin Americans from questioning the deleterious effect of Israeli policies on the occupied territories.

75. She proposed that Latin American countries officially invite Palestinian diplomatic missions where there were none; provide financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority; expand the repatriation of Palestinian experts to participate in the reconstruction of the Palestinian territories and include Latin American professionals and technicians for the same purpose; promote trade between Latin American Arab chambers of commerce and the Palestinian Authority; and provide internships for Palestinian students and professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean. The United Nations should help to promote the study of Palestinian history. The dialogue with Latin American Jewish communities should be pursued and consideration should be given to providing COPLAC and the other NGOs with access to electronic mail and to creating a joint bulletin board in order to forge links between the Palestinian territories and Latin America. She also called for an immediate halt to settlement construction and the release of prisoners.

IV. NGO WORKSHOPS

76. Separate workshops were held specifically for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs to consider the following topics:

I. Mobilization of and networking by NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote assistance to the Palestinian people

Moderator: Mr. José Félix Ferreyra
Speakers: Mr. Jaber Omar
Mr. Carlos Etchegoyhen
Mr. Gustavo Marcelo Marquez
Rapporteur: Ms. Tilda Rabi

II. NGO activities to mobilize public opinion for a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine - review of actions taken since the first Latin American and Caribbean Symposium in 1990 and future activities

Moderator: Mr. José Félix Ferreyra
Speakers: Mr. Juan Abugattas
Mr. José Elias A.
Mr. Juan José Salinas
Rapporteur: Mr. Hanna Safieh

Workshop I

Mobilization of and networking by NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote assistance to the Palestinian people

77. The workshop opened with a presentation by Mr. Jaber Omar, who proposed the following:

(a) The creation of a human resource database system in the Palestinian community in Latin America and the Caribbean;

(b) The opening of Latin American and Caribbean markets to Palestinian exports offering them preferential treatment and the mutual recognition of, chambers of commerce;

(c) The creation of Palestinian chambers of commerce in the Latin American and Caribbean countries in order to promote commerce and investment;

(d) Provision of technological assistance to the occupied territories by means of joint enterprises, direct investments in industry and agriculture, and training of labour in the administrative, financial, monetary, industrial and agricultural spheres.

78. Mr. Carlos Etchegoyhen spoke of the need for a technological contribution in health, education, employment, housing and human resources, and made reference to the proposals of Mr. Hussein Abdelkhalek and Mr. Juan José Salinas (both on panel III), who supported the creation of a Palestinian news agency in Latin America.

79. A wide-ranging question and answer session/discussion followed and the participants in the debate suggested:

(a) Meetings between Latin American and Palestinian businessmen;

(b) Provision by Latin American and Caribbean Governments of scholarships for Palestinians;

(c) Promotion of tourism in the occupied territories;

(d) Classification of the 115 registered NGOs for a more productive organization of work;

(e) Access to the Internet.

80. It was requested that NGOs work with their Governments for the recognition of Palestinian self-government and economic interchange was proposed between the American supranational institutions agreements (Mercosur, the Andean Pact, NAFTA, etc.) and Palestine.

Workshop II

NGO activities to mobilize public opinion for a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine - review of actions taken since the first Latin American and Caribbean Symposium in 1990 and future activities

81. Mr. Juan Abugattas expressed the view that the Palestinian question was presented to public opinion in Latin America and the Caribbean with a high emotional note, which was a mistake since it did not bring out the specific characteristics of the question.

82. Mr. José Elias A. pointed out that in Chile there was an Arab Cultural Centre where Arabic had been taught for 25 years, but not the characteristics of Palestinian culture. Also, political support of the Palestinian community in Chile had been given to political parties regardless of whether they were from the right or the left and without taking into account their positions with regard to the question of Palestine. He said that other Palestinian communities in Latin America and the Caribbean should organize and promote discussion with a view to generating a better understanding of the question.

83. Mr. Juan José Salinas analysed the way the media in Latin America presented a distorted view of the Palestinian question and proposed the creation of a news agency specializing in Middle East matters, working with Wafa, the Palestinian news agency, and the Internet.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM

84. The highlights of the proceedings in the Latin American and Caribbean Seminar and NGO Symposium were summarized in a final document, prepared by the Rapporteur in consultation with panelists and the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and presented to the participants at the final session. The document reads as follows:

1. Participants welcomed the positive developments in the Middle East peace process and the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) since September 1993, as well as subsequent developments. They considered that the Declaration of Principles was a historical breakthrough that had required great courage by the parties concerned and that with perseverance and the strong support of the international community as a whole a just and lasting peace could be achieved. It was noted that the Latin American and Caribbean countries had a significant contribution to make in that regard.

2. Participants expressed great concern, however, at the repeated delays in the implementation of the agreements reached, which generated insecurity and as such could disrupt the peace process. Participants called on the Government of Israel to cease all settlement building and expansion activities and land confiscation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, to end the closure of the territory, to release all Palestinian prisoners and to move quickly towards the prompt implementation of the second phase of the Declaration of Principles, including the redeployment of the Israeli military in the rest of the West Bank and the holding of Palestinian elections. The Government of Israel was also called upon to respect fully its obligations as the occupying Power under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

3. Condemnation was expressed of all acts of violence, of whatever form or whatever source, aimed at derailing the peace process, and which had resulted in many casualties among both Palestinians and Israelis. The essential need for both sides to take confidence-building measures, including the full implementation of Security Council resolution 904 (1994), was emphasized.

4. The meeting was apprised of the great challenges posed by the gradual transfer of responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority, aggravated by the present political and economic difficulties. The Authority was making large-scale efforts to build a national economy, reconstruct vital amenities, establish national institutions and achieve overall economic and social development. It was stressed that international support for the Palestinian people and its leadership in all fields - political, economic and social - was of paramount importance for the attainment of peace in the region.

5. Latin American and Caribbean countries in particular had much to contribute in view of their tradition of solidarity with the Palestinian people, the presence there of large Palestinian, Arab and Jewish communities with a tradition of living in harmony, and the experience of those countries in the struggle for self-determination as well as in nation- and institution- building and economic development.

6. It was stressed that the basic aim of international aid should be to assist in laying the structural groundwork and providing the major productive and social impetus for the Palestinian development plan in the shortest possible time, and to promote self-reliant development. It was pointed out that international assistance could be directed towards certain sectors, including infrastructure and communications; technology transfer; job creation and diversification of production; advisory assistance in institutional, financial and entrepreneurial matters; urban and housing development; water resource management; energy generation; intensive agriculture; and education and health programmes. Emphasis was also placed on the role the international community could play in Palestinian efforts at democratic and social education at all levels and for all age groups.

7. Participants appealed to the donor countries and the World Bank to accelerate the delivery of the aid promised as an essential stimulus for development and an ideal means of promoting peace. The efforts of the United Nations Secretary-

General and his Special Coordinator for the Occupied Territories in mobilizing assistance by the relevant United Nations agencies and programmes and strengthening coordination with the donor community were noted with appreciation. Participants welcomed the decision by the Secretary-General to transfer UNRWA headquarters from Vienna to Gaza.

8. It was emphasized that the source of the flow of international assistance should not be confined to the major economic centres, since many members of the international community, regardless of their relative level of development, were capable of providing various kinds of economic, social and humanitarian assistance. The countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region were called upon to identify potential spheres of cooperation and to make concrete proposals for assistance, in coordination with their Palestinian counterparts and with the support and sponsorship of the relevant international organizations whenever needed. The importance of the involvement of the private sector was also mentioned in that connection.

9. It was stated that diaspora Palestinians living in the different countries of the region could make a great contribution to reconstruction, institution-building and development of the Palestinian territory in view of their professional, economic and financial experience and strength. Diaspora Palestinians and their associations could facilitate the search for various forms of assistance, such as developing mechanisms for granting loans to Palestinian businesses; offering training possibilities in agriculture and industry; technology transfer; and development of joint ventures. It was suggested in that regard that visiting tours for Palestinian businessmen and Palestinian Authority members should be organized, and exchange programmes for students and faculty developed.

10. Cognizant of the vital contribution of Palestinian women in the struggle of the Palestinian people for the attainment of its inalienable rights and of their participation in development and state-building efforts, and in view of the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women, participants noted their conviction that Palestinian women would continue to consolidate their past achievements.

11. Participants emphasized the great importance of developing trade between the self-rule areas and the Latin American and Caribbean countries. It was recommended that the Governments of the region give preferential treatment to Palestinian products, and that joint chambers of commerce should be created.

12. In view of the need to develop cooperation between Palestine and Latin American countries, participants encouraged those Governments in Latin America that had not yet done so to establish official relations with the PLO and to extend diplomatic recognition to its offices in their countries in order to streamline and facilitate the desired cooperation.

13. It was also suggested that the traditionally harmonious relations between the Palestinian and Jewish communities in Latin America could provide the foundation for joint activities aimed at improving mutual understanding and tackling difficult issues in a spirit of cooperation. It was recommended that meetings of representatives of the two communities in Latin America and their NGOs be organized to consider common concerns, including sensitive issues such as the Palestinian right of return. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was requested to consider organizing a meeting of that nature, together with representatives from Palestine and Israel, as part of its programme of regional events.

14. The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as opinion-leaders and as an essential link between the people and the Government of each country was stressed. NGOs in the Latin American and Caribbean region were called upon to define

action strategies responsive to Palestinian needs. It was also recommended that NGOs use their mediating influence on Governments in order to ensure the adoption of policies responsive to the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as well as their need to sustainable development. It was recommended that direct links should be forged between the Palestinian Authority and Latin American and Caribbean organizations in all fields of NGO competence, including trade, cultural links, training, health and education. It was also emphasized that NGOs had an important role to play in assisting their Palestinian counterparts in their efforts to build a civil society.

15. It was proposed that non-governmental organizations should disseminate reliable information on the realities of life of the Palestinian people and the status of the peace process. They should look into the possibility of joining, through the Internet, the proposed establishment of the Latin American segment of a possible Middle East news agency, which should include participation by Palestinian and Israeli journalists.

VI. CLOSING SESSION

85. **His Excellency Mr. José Mauricio Bustani**, Minister, Head of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, on behalf of his Government, summarized the discussions, saying that the three panels reached what was expected: to promote an exchange of opinions not only about the political questions related to the peace process but also about the possibilities of socio-economic, technical and commercial cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the Palestinian self-government. Participants were united in their goal. The peace process was vital and a new dynamic would make possible the major participation of the international community.

86. **Mr. José Félix Ferreyra**, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine, announced the composition of the new Coordinating Committee (see annex III). He called on NGOs to disseminate the ideas put forward at the meeting. The Coordinating Committee was committed to an increasingly strong role in ending the suffering of the Palestinian people by helping them to build a new nation.

87. **Mr. Musa Oudeh**, Special Envoy of Palestine, said he hoped that as a result of the meeting a greater understanding of the Palestinians would be achieved. A new era had begun in which Palestinians were looking for peace after many years of violence and occupation. Palestinians had chosen peace but they needed international support to end the difficult and complicated conflict. No occupation would last for ever and, with international help, Palestinians could end their suffering and achieve the benefits of peace.

88. **His Excellency Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, summarizing issues discussed during panel presentations at the meeting, said participants had been united by a common goal - further promoting the peace process in the Middle East. He said that the statements and documents of the Seminar and NGO Symposium had demonstrated the unanimous desire of the participants to support that evolution and to contribute to resolving the plight of the Palestinian people by helping it achieve its right to self-determination and the end of the occupation. He was gratified that Latin American and Caribbean NGOs had been able to lay the foundation for a more effective organization of their future action with regard to that question. He stressed the importance of the United Nations role in the difficult period ahead. The Committee would strengthen its efforts to monitor the situation, to bring new developments affecting Palestinian rights to the attention of the international community, to mobilize international public opinion and action, and to promote efforts to give concrete assistance to meet the present and future needs of Palestinians in rebuilding their country.

ANNEX I

Motion of thanks

The participants in the United Nations Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine for Latin America and the Caribbean, held from 20 to 23 March 1995 at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, express their profound thanks to the Government and people of Brazil for generously providing a venue for this meeting and for the excellent arrangements made, which greatly contributed to its success. The participants wish also to convey their sincere gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Adhemar Gabriel Bahadian, Chief of Staff of the Acting Minister for External Relations of Brazil, for his statement of firm support for all efforts in the search for peace in the Middle East and for a just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine. The participants take this opportunity to convey their appreciation to the Government and people of Brazil for their expressed readiness to support and assist the Palestinian people in their efforts to rebuild their nation.

ANNEX II

List of participants

Panelists

Mr. Hussein Abdelkhalek
Representative of Palestine in Chile

Mr. Juan Abugattas
Professor of Philosophy, University of San Marcos and
the University of Lima, Peru

Mr. Nabil Amr
Member, Central Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization;
editor of the weekly newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah

Mr. Uri Avnery
Israeli journalist, writer and peace activist

Mr. Pedro Paulo Pinto Assumpção
Ambassador, Head of the Middle East Department, Ministry of External Relations of Braz

Mr. Ran Cohen
Member of the Israeli Knesset; Chairperson of the Meretz Faction

Mr. Luís Mesa Delmonte
Director, Centre for Studies on Africa and the Middle East, Havana

Mr. José Elias A.
President, University of San Andrés, Chile;
President of the Palestinian Federation in Chile

Mr. Sa'eb Erakat
Member of the Palestinian Authority;
Chairman of the Palestine Electoral Commission

Mr. Carlos Etchegoyhen
Medical doctor and psychoanalyst, Uruguay;
Visiting Scholar at the University of North Dakota

Mr. José Félix Ferreyra
Chairman, Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean NGOs on the Question of Palestine; Professor of Psychology at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Costa Rica

Mr. Gustavo Marcelo Marquez
Businessman, member of the Argentine Arab Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Ivan Moreira
Deputy, Chilean Parliament

Mr. Sari Nusseibeh
President of Al-Quds University, Jerusalem;
Chairperson, Palestine Consultancy Group

Mr. Jaber Omar
Professor of Economics, Catholic University of Pelotas
and Federal University of Rio Grande, Brazil

Ms. Tilda Rabi
President, Federation of Palestinian Organizations in Argentina

Mr. Hanna Safieh
Professor at the Federal University of Natal, Brazil;
member of the Palestine National Council

Mr. Juan José Salinas
Journalist, TELAM News Agency, Argentina

Delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

His Excellency Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé
Chairman
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations,
New York

His Excellency Mr. Joseph Cassar
Rapporteur
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations,
New York

His Excellency Mr. İnal Batu
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations,
New York

His Excellency Mr. Anatoli Maximovich Zlenko
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations,
New York

Mr. Nasser M. Al-Kidwa
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations,
New York

Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Mrs. Laura Reanda
Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights, Department of Political Affairs

	Governments
Brazil	His Excellency Mr. Adhemar Gabriel Bahadian Ambassador, Chief of Staff of the Acting Minister for External Relations
	His Excellency Mr. José Mauricio Bustani Minister, Head of the Department of International Organizations
	Mr. Laudemar Gonçalves de Aguiar Neto First Secretary
	Mr. Paulo Roberto Soares Pacheco Second Secretary
	Mr. Milton Coutinho Third Secretary
	Mr. Ronaldo Barros
China	Mr. Wang Hua First Secretary, Embassy of China to Brazil
Colombia	Mr. Juan Lozano Provenzano Consul-General of Colombia in Rio de Janeiro
Ecuador	Mr. Ricardo Falconi-Puig Consul-General of Ecuador in Rio de Janeiro
Egypt	His Excellency Mr. Cherif El-Marachi Ambassador Consul-General of Egypt in Rio de Janeiro
	Mr. Kadi A. Mottaleb Consul of Egypt in Rio de Janeiro
India	His Excellency Mr. Gurdip S. Bedi Ambassador of India to Brazil
Morocco	Mr. Tarik Louajri First Secretary, Embassy of Morocco to Brazil
Norway	Mr. Kari M. Bjomsgaard Second Secretary, Embassy of Norway to Brazil
Republic of Korea	Mr. Byong Hyun Lee First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, New York
Romania	Mr. Vasile Macovei Consul-General of Romania in Rio de Janeiro

Spain	Mr. Victor Fagilde Consul-General of Spain in Rio de Janeiro
	Francisco Javier San Roman Gaona Attaché, General Consulate of Spain in Rio de Janeiro
Thailand	Mr. Nipon Petchpornprapas Second Secretary, Royal Thai Embassy to Brazil
	Mr. Samran Ruenreang Information Officer, Royal Thai Embassy to Brazil
Trinidad and Tobago	Mr. Keith de Freitas Second Secretary, Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago to Brazil
Tunisia	His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Bachrouch Ambassador of Tunisia to Brazil
United States of America	Mrs. Nadia Tongour Consul of the United States of America in Rio de Janeiro
Uruguay	Mrs. Marta Echarte Baraibar Consul-General of Uruguay in Rio de Janeiro
	Mr. Arturo Villarreal Deputy Consul
Venezuela	His Excellency Mr. Pedro Emilio Coll Ambassador Consul-General of Venezuela in Rio de Janeiro

United Nations specialized agencies and organs

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	Mr. Ismail Hamad Senior Human Settlements Advisor
United Nations Information Centre, Rio de Janeiro	Mr. Aurelio Ruiz Minagorre Director
	Ms. Heloisa Seixas Information Officer
	Ms. Valeria Schilling

Intergovernmental organizations

Organization of the Islamic Conference	Mr. Abdulaziz Aboughosh Assistant Secretary-General

Other organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining a permanent observer mission at Headquarters

Palestine	Mr. Musa Oudeh Special Envoy
	Mr. Ibrahim Al Zeben Chargé d'affaires ad interim Delegation of Palestine to Brazil

Non-governmental organizations

Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores	Mr. Lourenço Cardoso Jr.
Comité Peruano por la Paz (COPEPAZ)	Mr. Eleazar Gutarra Maravi
Confederación Palestina Latinoamericana y del Caribe (COPLAC)	Ms. Patricia Abuchaibe Mr. Hassan Emleh Mr. J. Ackel Hussein Mr. Salem Abdel Jabber Ms. Andrea Jadue Mr. Jaber Omar Mr. Rodolfo Alberto Proto Ms. Hanna Yousef Safieh Ms. Jacira G. Gondim Safieh Mr. Anuar H. Dib Haj Umar
Consejo Armenio-Argentino de la Paz	Mr. Jose Dokmetjian
Federación de Entidades Americano-Árabes	Mr. Khaled Salama
Federación de Entidades Argentino-Árabes FEARAB - Argentina	Mr. Brahim Hesain
FEARAB - America	Mr. Adib Saleh
FEARAB - Brazil	Dr. Morshed Taha Mr. Jemile Miriam Diban Readi
FEARAB - Canada	Mr. Alexander M. Hartt
FEARAB - Cuba	Mr. Nestor Proveyer Derich
FEARAB - Honduras	Mr. Roberto Diban
Federación de Entidades Palestinas de la República Argentina	Ms. Tilda Rabi Mr. Rodolfo Alfredo Proto
Federación Palestina de Chile	Mr. José Elias Aboid

Fundación Argentina para el Tercer Mundo (FATEM)	Mr. José Felix Ferreyra
Fundación Los Cedros	Mr. Brahim Hesain
Unión Árabe de Cuba	Mr. Alfred Deriche Gutierrez

Observer organizations

Associacão Paidéia	Ms. Aura Rejane Gomes
Centro Brasileiro das Questões da Palestina (Brazilian Centre on the Question of Palestine)	Mr. Jefferson Tardin
Liga dos Direitos Humanos (League of Human Rights)	Mr. Jefferson Tardin
Comitê de la Libertação de Lâmia (Committee for the Liberation of Lâmia	Mr. Aluisio Andrade Lemos Mr. Bruno Bearlini

Special guest

Mr. Paulo Gonçalves	Representative of the President of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro

ANNEX III

Membership of the Coordinating Committee for Latin American and Caribbean Non-governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine, 1995-1996

1. **Fundación Argentina para el Tercer Mundo**
Mr. José Felix Ferreyra (Chairman)
Avenida Belgrano 612, 1° Piso
1092 Buenos Aires
Argentina
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Fax: (54-1) 322-8733

2. **Federación de Entidades Palestinas de la República Argentina**
Ms. Tilda Rabi
Riobamba 190 2° E
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1025 Argentina
Tel/Fax: 953-7401

3. **Federación de Entidades Culturales Judías**
Mr. Angel Gruschka
Rocamora 4121
1184 Buenos Aires
Argentina

4. **MOVIPAZ (Movimiento para la Paz)**
Mr. José Francisco Aguilar Bulgarelli
Apartado 408 (2050)
San José
Costa Rica

5. **COPLAC (Palestinian Confederation for Latin America and the Caribbean)**
Rua Apodi, 500 Tirol
59020-130 Natal, RN
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Tel: (55-84) 221-3026
Fax: (55-84) 222-7467

Chile: Ms. Andrea Jadue
Brazil: Mr. Jaber Omar
Executive Committee: Mr. Hanna Safieh

6. **FEARAB (Federación de Entidades Americano-Árabes)**
P.O. Box 2090
Zona libre de Colón
Panama
Tel: (507) 41-5365
Fax: (507) 41-4522

Caribbean: Mr. Chediak
Executive Committee: Mr. Khaled Salama

7. **Asociación de Profesionales Chileno-Palestino**
Mr. José Elias Aboid
Avenida Presidente Kennedy 9351
Las Condes
Santiago
Chile
Tel/Fax: 212-6462

8. **Centro de Estudios sobre África y el Oriente Medio**
Mr. Luís Mesa Delmonte
Avenida Tercera No. 1805
Miramar Plaza
Havana
Cuba

9. **Associacão Paidéia - São Paulo**
Mr. Aura Rejane Gomes, President
Rua da Chazara, 105
São Paulo
Brazil
Tel: (55-11) 203-6898
Fax: (55-11) 283-5598 or 283-5662

10. and 11. Two additional NGOs would be named in the future from representatives of the Jewish community in Latin America and the Caribbean.